

## Liturgy We Live *by Dr. Gil Haas*

Lent's fourth Sunday is called Laetare. Like the third Sunday of Advent (Gaudete Sunday), Laetare Sunday is a mid-season break in a penitential season. The vestments for this Sunday are rose in color, a lighter shade of Lent's somber liturgical color of purple. Rose symbolizes joy and hope in the middle of Lent's penitential themes. Laetare means "rejoice", and this Latin word is the opening word of the ancient Catholic introit assigned to this Sunday. The English translation of this introit is: "Rejoice, O Jerusalem: and come together all you that love her...". Since medieval times, a simnel cake is baked on this Sunday. "Simnel" is derived from the Latin word "simila", which is a fine, white flour that is used in the cake's recipe. This rich, sweet concoction has marzipan in the cake's middle and on its top. Eleven balls of additional marzipan are positioned around the cake's upper surface representing Christ's eleven apostles, minus Judas. Laetare is also known as "Mothering Sunday", and it is celebrated like our Mothers' Day. Spring bulbs are often given to mothers as a present. A visit to one's cathedral, or "mother" church, is another manifestation of "mothering".

***If you have a liturgical question or an inquiry about anything that transpires during or around our worship service, please forward the question you would like researched to: [gghaas@aol.com](mailto:gghaas@aol.com), or drop the question in the offering basin. Please note whether we can credit you as the source of the question.***